

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SECURE ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

ABSTRACT

One embodiment of the present invention provides a system that facilitates secure electronic commerce. The system operates by first providing a consumer with a file of security data relating to an account maintained by a financial institution. The consumer then creates a financial transaction with a merchant using security data from the file to protect the financial transaction. This financial transaction is structured to prevent the merchant from knowing the account number for the account. Next, the merchant validates that the financial institution identified by the financial transaction is acceptable using security data from the file. The merchant then requests that the financial institution authorize the financial transaction. Upon receiving authorization to complete the financial transaction, the merchant completes the financial transaction. Finally, the merchant notifies the financial institution that the financial transaction is complete.